

JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

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No. 31

NATIONAL YOUTH LEADERS CONFERENCE SCHEDULED FOR KATASE

About 30 national youth leaders representing various denominations and Christian organizations will gather at Katase from Jan. 26-28 to make plans for the year's program. Representatives who attended the International YMCA conference in the Philippines, the World Baptists Youth Convention in Brazil, and the International YWCA Conference will give their reports to the meeting.

The conference will concentrate on 4 questions: 1. Use of the Evanston theme "Christ the Hope of the World" with youth groups; 2. Promotion of the Student Evangelistic Movement; 3. A study of the curriculum for youth leaders training courses; 4. The 1954 Work Camp program.

SUNDAY SCHOOL DEPT. HOLDS CURRICULUM CONFERENCE

A joint conference of the Sunday School curriculum commission and curriculum writers was held for the first time at Katase from Jan. 6-8. The conference adopted resolutions to: 1. Issue quarterly newsletters to the writers covering new trends in S.S. writing abroad, and other matters of interest. 2. Hold writers workshops of 5 days each in May and October. The new 1954 edition of the Church School Curriculum is now available.

DELEGATES RETURN FROM OKINAWA

Dr. and Mrs. Browning and Mr. Yasumura, Sunday School delegates who visited Okinawa during the Christmas holidays returned with their report last week. The Sunday School Commission decided on a basis of this to send complete Sunday School material to the Okinawa churches, and to invite 1 or 2 Okinawa Leaders to attend a training institute in Kyushu on a scholarship basis.

DIST SUPTS TO DISCUSS SENDING MISSIONARIES TO OKINAWA AND AMAMI OSHIMA

The Tokyo District Sunday School Superintendents will approach the topic of sending new missionaries to Okinawa and Amami Oshima at their meeting in Ginza Church on January 22.

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SUNDAY SCHOOLERS GIVEN DISCOUNT FOR "ROBE"

Twentieth Century Fox has agreed to Give a 10% discount to any Sunday School members wishing to see the Cinema Scope production of The Robe, now showing at the Yurakuza. To receive the discount, tickets must be purchased through Mr. Fujita, NCC office.

DR. AXLING REPORTS INTEREST IN CHRISTIANITY STILL HIGH IN 53

Dr. William Axling, retired Baptist missionary now acting as a travelling evangelist for the Kyodan, has reported 432 baptisms as a result of 210 meetings held during 1953. Although attendance at the meetings averaged slightly less than in 1952, Dr. Axling believes interest in Christianity is still high in Japan, and cited the 2,152 decision cards which he received to prove this. While 80% of these cards were from young people, Dr. Axling also reported some success with the older generation, supposedly notoriously difficult to convert. An 82 year old was the oldest convert resulting from the 40 special meetings he held for the older age group, but another 8 or 9 converttees were over 70. Dr. Axling will be continuing his evangelistic work during the coming year.

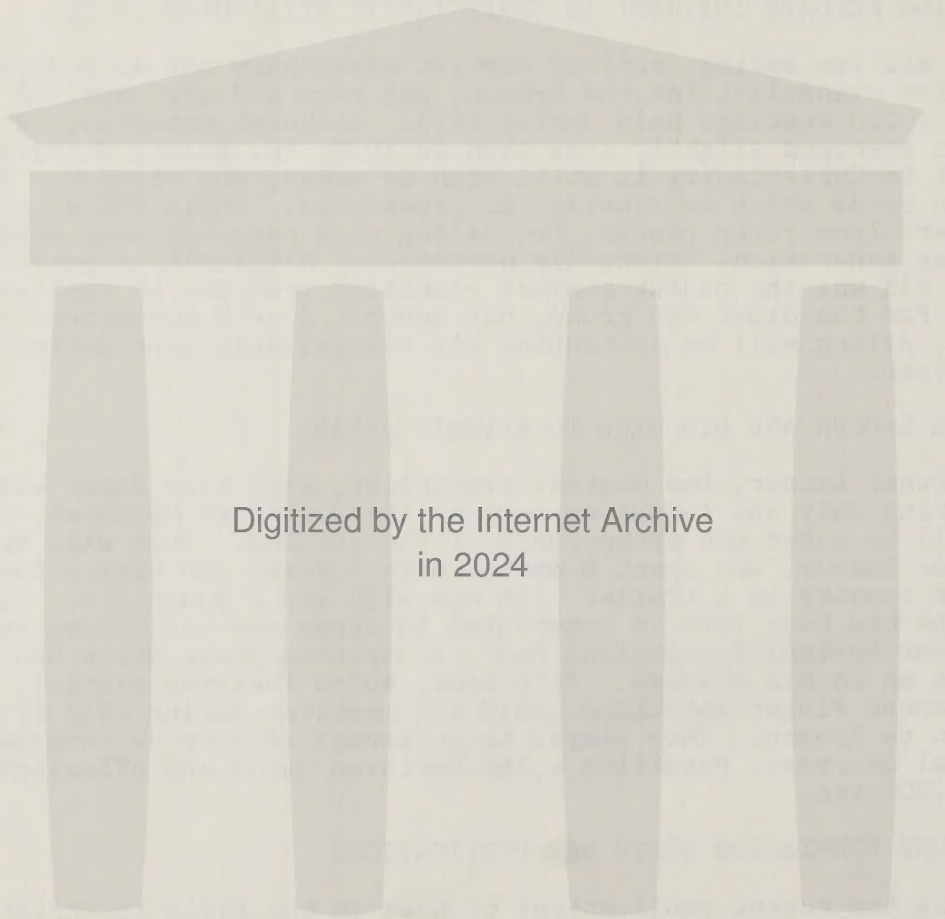
LAWRENCE LACOUR AND HIS BAND TO REVISIT JAPAN

Lawrence Lacour, the musical evangelist, will tour Japan with his band during July and August as part of the Centenary Movement. His tour will be under the sponsorship of the NCCCUSA. This will be a second visit for Lacour, who spent 6 months here 2 years ago travelling all over the country in a trailer with his wife and 2 daughters. Since this visit, he has been vitally interested in Japan and has helped support the Lacour Musical Evangelical Band, a Japanese group which has been carrying on in his absence. This Band, which features pianist, singing, and Japanese Finger Whistling, held 105 meetings during 1953 from Hokkaido to Kyushu. They played to audiences of over 52 thousand in the local churches, receiving 4,140 decision cards and offerings totalling 548,000 yen.

LITERATURE COMMISSION RESTS NEW PUBLICATIONS

Among the recent publications of note in the field in Christian Literature are the following: Life Stories of Japanese Christians, (Kyodan Publishing Dept.) selected by the Devotional Literature Commission from those submitted by local churches. A Christian Handbook on Communism (Literature Dept. NCC) translated from the NCCCUSA publication by Professor Yoshimitsu Endo of the Episcopal Seminary. Biographic Series for Junior Boys and Girls: (Sogensha, Osaka) 4 volumes of 12 each on William Booth, Livingston, Saint Damien, John Wannamaker. Stories for Junior Worship (Kyobunkwan) a Japanese edition of the Kemsy work. Christian Plays for Sunday School (NCC Literature Dept.) edited by AVACO Drama Committee. A second series of 12 evangelical tracts is being planned to follow the very popular first series of 10. Guide to Real Life: a series of 12 pamphlets discussing problems of Christian living. Best Sermons by Japanese Pastors Vol. 2 is now being compiled. Handbook for Lay Leaders, newly edited by Lay Leaders Training Commission.

The Christian magazine New Age now publishes 8,000 copies at the new price of 60 yen per copy. Nosen, (now 40 yen) the Rural Magazine



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which has had tough going is being given a shot in the arm by having Kagawa take over as editor.

Literature Secretary Ebisawa will fly to Sapporo to attend the All Hokkaido Conference on Christian Evangelism from Jan. 13-15.

CHRISTIAN LEADERS ON TV AND RADIO

Dr. Toyohiko Kagawa and Mrs. Hanako Muraoka explained "How Christians Celebrate Christmas" to a nationwide TV audience on Christmas day. On New Years, Bishop Martin emphasised the Evanston topic "Christ the Hope of the World" when he spoke over the Japanese Radio Network. Bishop Martin followed representatives of Shinto, Buddhism and Catholicism, each of whom brought a New Years message from their own particular faith. The program went out to 48 stations.

AVACO NOW SPONSORING 2 REGULAR RADIO PROGRAMS

The AVACO Radio programs are now received by stations covering all of Japan, announced Mr. Ogawa, AVACO head. The popular 15 minute "Musical Flower Garden" features music, singing, and episodes in the daily life of a Christian Home, and goes out to 12 stations. The Sunday morning 30 minutes of classical music which is geared to the church calendar and accompanied by an explanatory talk now goes out over 9 stations. AVACO hopes to expand its program when its new studio is completed next fall.

CHRISTIAN LABOR RELATIONS EXPERT TO VISIT JAPAN

Mr. Henry Jones, Presbyterian Missionary who formerly worked in the field of Christian Labor and Industrial Relations in China, will arrive in Japan on January 14. There is a possibility that he may be persuaded to stay for several months or for 2 or 3 years to help the Japanese church in this work. He will be connected with the Social Problems Commission and the Occupational Evangelism Commission of the Kyodan.

BIBLE SOCIETY CONDUCTS CAMPAIGNS IN NAGOYA AND OKINAWA

Nagoya will be the scene of a special 2 month Bible distribution campaign to begin on Jan. 10 under the auspices of the Japan Bible Society. Secretary G. Ishikawa, Audio Visual Aids expert, will assist in the campaign which will be conducted by 8 colporteurs in cooperation with the local churches.

Veteran JBS colporteur Mr. Kichibei Kamata will go to Okinawa during January to work in the Bible Depot established there last summer. He will help train local workers during his 2 month stay there.

AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY FOREIGN SECRETARY VISITS FAR EAST

Iaton E. Holmgren, foreign secretary for the ABS, arrived in Tokyo on Jan. 8. Mr. Holmgren preached the following Sunday at Tokyo Union Church, where he was acting pastor from 1951 til 1952. He will proceed to Korea and Okinawa after attending NCC and Bible Society meetings in Tokyo and Osaka.

SPECIAL ISSUE TO CARRY COMPLETE JAPANESE REPORT TO EVANSTON ASSEMBLY

A special edition of the Japan Christian Activity News will be published next week to present the entire text of the report for the Evanston Assembly of the Commission on Ecumenical Study of the Japan National Christian Council. The Commission was organized especially in May, 1953 to prepare this report for the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches with the feeling that an NCC group could best give a cross-section of Protestant Christian opinion in Japan. The 25 page Report gives the viewpoint of the Japanese churches on the topics which will be discussed at Evanston and is built around the following outline: Theme: Christ--the Hope of the World; Faith and Order; Evangelism; Social Questions; International Affairs; Inter-group Relations; The Laity. Copies of the report will be sent automatically to all subscribers, and additional copies may be secured from the NCC office.

